New project proposals for these programmes are formulated by the State Governments and are submitted to Ministry of Rural Development and are sanctioned keeping in view the availability of treatable wastelands in the States, incidence of poverty, unemployment, water scarcity and performance of on-going projects in the State. Projects under the programme are implemented over a period of five years and funds are released in seven installments, on project-to-project basis and no State-wise allocations are made.

In so far as degraded lands are concerned, Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Soil Conservation for enhancing Productivity in the degraded watersheds in River Valley Projects (RVP) and Flood Prone Rivers (FPR) to develop the degraded watersheds in the country. The scheme is being implemented under Macro Management mode of the Ministry. During the current financial year, an allocation of Rs. 5.7 crore has been proposed by the Government of Gujarat for the scheme.

In-situ soil and moisture conservation measures are the key operations in these projects, which result in improvement in the availability of surface and ground water. These projects also help in improving productivity of the degraded lands/wastelands and generate additional bio-mass, especially fuel-wood and fodder, creating more employment in rural areas in a sustainable manner, thereby ensuring overall poverty alleviation.

Water sharing talks with Nepal

† 5098. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have held any talks on sharing of water of the rivers which flow in India but originate in Nepal;

(b) if so, the details of the official talks held with the Government of Nepal in this regard in the last few years; and

(c) the details of the proposals made by India for the talk?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATIBIJOYACHAKRAVARTY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Water Shortage in Tamil Nadu

5099. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister ofWATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of acute water shortage in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to provide suitable financial assistance to Tamil Nadu for setting up treatment plants for making sea water into potable water;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OFWATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) During the current year, as on 3.5.2002, the water availability in the live storage of 70 major reservoirs of the country being monitored by Central Water Commission representing 74% of the total live storage created in the country, was 22.9 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) which is less than the last year's availability of 24.1 BCM as well as the average availability during last ten years of 32.6 BCM. In the six major reservoirs inTamil Nadu—with combined live storage capacity of 4.39 BCM as against total live storage capacity of 6.76 BCM created inTamil Nadu—the overall availability of water in live storages as on 3.5.2002 is 0.48 BCM, against the average availability of last ten years of 2.10 BCM and the last year's storage on the corresponding day as 2.03 BCM.

(b) to (d) Setting up of treatment plant for making sea-water into potable water for supply to rural areas can be taken up under Sub-Mission on "Control of Excess Brackishness". The powers to prepare project and implement such schemes has been delegated to the State Governments w.e.f. 1.4.1998, by Ministry of Rural Development. The proposal to provide suitable financial assistance for setting up treatment plant for making sea